



MESSAGE FROM THE CALTRANS DIRECTOR

This is the first issue of the *The Mile Marker: A Caltrans Performance Report*, a plain-language, multimedia accounting of the California Department of Transportation. *The Mile Marker* is reform. It raises the bar on transparency and accountability, providing in one place a clear way to communicate our performance.

Caltrans this year will provide 24 specific reports to the state legislature. Some of them are complicated and include reams of data that can be difficult to decipher. *The Mile Marker* is different. It delivers information that policy experts want in plain language and clear illustrations. The report is written for anyone who wants to know how well the Department of Transportation does its job.

This report is a natural extension of reforms I began since being appointed the director of Caltrans. It addresses ongoing efforts and improvements coming from my departmentwide Program Review. The report was prompted by the secretary of the California State Transportation Agency and the chair of the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee. It also addresses input from various transportation stakeholders to ensure transparency of the department's operations.

Performance reporting—the clear measurement of government activity—is a growing trend among transportation departments around the country. The federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century program specifically calls for performance measurements. *The Mile Marker* will be the tool with which we communicate our performance results with policymakers, the media, and the public.

This first report does not pretend to be anything but a start, a beginning on a road that will lead to greater transparency and real accountability. As we develop this process and this report, *The Mile Marker* will grow, adding relevant measurements that can be monitored over time, so that the performance of the department and the condition of California's transportation infrastructure can be plainly understood.

I hope you find this first issue useful, and I look forward to your comments and suggestions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Malcolm Dougherty".

Malcolm Dougherty